

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 103 340

SO 008 229

TITLE Research and Development in Education. A Survey.
INSTITUTION Organisation for Economic Cooperation and
Development, Paris (France).
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 57p.
AVAILABLE FROM OECD Publications Center, Suite 1207, 1750
Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.
(\$2.50)
EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.76 HC Not Available from EDRS. PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Comparative Education; Development; Educational
Development; Educational Finance; Educational Policy;
*Educational Research; Financial Support; Higher
Education; Personnel; Policy Formation; *Research and
Development Centers; *Research Utilization
IDENTIFIERS Europe

ABSTRACT

This document analyzes the institutional arrangements governing the size, nature, and directions of the educational research and development (R&D) efforts in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. The main themes of the present survey are the explicit or implicit goals of educational R&D, its relation to pedagogical practice, and the part it plays in policy and decision-making. A brief summary of the history of educational R&D, identifies two stages: the first relates to a period and situation where R&D did not aspire to intervene directly in education and the second is characterized by a move towards direct and purposeful intervention. These stages are both very much in evidence in the various OECD countries. The chapters following the introduction examine the different types of R&D centers, experimental and development agencies, and dissemination efforts; analyze the available data on finance and human resources devoted to R&D; indicate the substantive nature of R&D efforts; examine the trends in policy-making and planning; and deal with current strategies for R&D that are a function of the value and authority structure of individual educational and social systems. (Author/JH)

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RESEARCH
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A SURVEY

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PARIS 1974

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**RESEARCH
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FOREWORD

The present Survey attempts to assess the current position of educational R & D and its relation to educational policy. More specifically, it seeks to determine present trends in the organisation of R & D and to identify the institutional and decision-making mechanisms which govern the research process. The scientific content of R & D programmes as such has not been considered except insofar as it relates to the general context of educational policy.

Considerable difficulties were encountered in the preparation of the present Survey, notably because the institutional status of educational R & D in most countries still remains uncertain. Furthermore, the information and statistics available regarding resources, personnel and research projects were often insufficient or based on unreliable or unknown criteria.

The status of the research worker is determined in each country according to national regulations which are difficult to standardise. The same problem is experienced in other aspects of the R & D process. For example, in training programmes, occupational structures, financing and planning methods, or even in defining research fields, differences are so great as to render international comparisons misleading. Thus, the tables presented in the text are of value only insofar as they offer some comparative indication of magnitude.

Except for occasional references to non-European Member countries, the review is limited to the European area of OECD. As such, it would be instructive to compare it with the comprehensive analysis of educational R & D in the United States published in 1971 by OECD (Reviews of National Policies for Education : the United States). The extent to which the present publication is a less ambitious attempt reflects, for the most part, the differences in role, volume and purpose of R & D between the two shores of the Atlantic.

This Survey, published under the responsibility of the Secretariat, was prepared within the programme of the Education Committee. Earlier drafts of the report were scrutinized by the Education Committee of the Organisation and by the national authorities in the Member countries. All information for which sources are not given has been submitted or verified by the national authorities concerned.

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SUMMARY

The present document is concerned with an analysis of the institutional arrangements governing the size, nature and directions of the educational R & D effort in OECD countries, particularly European. It attempts to describe and, to the extent possible, evaluate the present organisation of R & D and its current problems rather than study the internal development of the scientific disciplines which contribute to education. Thus, the main themes of the present survey are the explicit or implicit goals of educational R & D, its relation to pedagogical practice, and the part it plays in policy and decision-making. The scientific aspects of the R & D enterprise are considered only in terms of their institutional implications and in their relation to the education system.

After a brief survey of the history of educational R & D in Europe, the following topics are successively dealt with in the report :

- a) The institutional framework of educational R & D ;
- b) Resources in financing and personnel ;
- c) Substantive areas of research ;
- d) Policy-making and planning for educational R & D ;
- e) Current strategies for educational R & D.

In its relation to educational practice and public needs, two stages can be identified in the historical development of R & D, described in the Introduction. Stage I relates to a period and situations where R & D did not aspire to intervene directly in education but rather to influence, in a more indirect and diffuse way, the attitudes and behaviour of the participants in the educational process. Since the last war however, and especially during the last decade, we have been witnessing a transition to a new stage, characterised by a move towards a more direct and purposeful intervention ; free research is accompanied, and sometimes tends to be superseded, by inspired and commissioned research ; decision-oriented research and development appear today as important as conclusion-oriented investigations.

In the short run such a development may be accompanied by a certain amount of tension between the goals of academic and of developmental research (and, to some extent, between politics and research). But it has been recognised that, to be effective, applied and developmental research have to depend heavily on free academic research. Thus, the framework which is now being sought in OECD Member countries consists in the reabsorption of Stage I into Stage II. However, this has not yet been achieved and in most countries the two stages continue to have their separate implications in institutional forms, in personnel and in finance ; the characteristics of both stages appear presently to co-exist rather than to be integrated. The pattern today is one of the transition from unplanned arrangements, which nevertheless had an implicit coherence, to planned set-ups, in most cases still searching for a new unity. While traces of both stages